

On page 7, line 29, insert --,-- after "location", delete "makes" and insert --is-- after "it".

On page 7, line 31, change "as long as" to --provided that--.

On page 8, line 1, change "Claims" to --WHAT IS CLAIMED IS--.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel original claims 1 - 19 and cancel substitute claims 1 - 14, without prejudice, and add new claims 15 - 28 as follows:

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15. (New) A startup/driving authorization system for a vehicle, comprising:
a control unit provided in the vehicle; and
a portable transponder, the control unit and portable transponder engaging in an interrogation/response dialog to perform one of an operation including a checking and approval and an operation including a denial of entry into the vehicle and an authorization to start and drive the vehicle by exchanging identification codes, wherein:

a second interrogation/response dialog between the control unit and the transponder and at least one of a driver-triggered switching process, an additional switching state, and an operating state of a monitored vehicle component are required to enable the startup/driving authorization system, and

after vehicle entry has been approved, preliminary startup procedures are automatically initiated and locks for at least one of a steering system, a power transmission, and a gear train are released in accordance with the second interrogation/response dialog triggered within the vehicle.

16. (New) The startup/driving authorization system according to claim 15, wherein at least one of a driver-settable switching state and the operating state includes a presence of a driver in a driver's seat of the vehicle.

17. (New) The startup/driving authorization system according to claim 15, wherein at least one of a driver-settable switching state and the operating state includes an activated switch of a seat belt of a driver's seat of the vehicle.

18. (New) The startup/driving authorization system according to claim 15, wherein at least one of a preset switching state and the operating state includes an activation of at least one of a brake pedal and a clutch of the vehicle.

19. (New) The startup/driving authorization system according to claim 15, wherein at least one of a preset switching state and the operating state includes a neutral position of a gear train of the vehicle.

20. (New) The startup/driving authorization system according to claim 15, wherein at least one of a preset switching state and the operating states includes a position of a selection lever in a P/N position of an automatic transmission of the vehicle.

21. (New) The startup/driving authorization system according to claim 15, wherein at least one of a preset switching state and the operating state includes an end of a warm-up period in a diesel vehicle.

22. (New) The startup/driving authorization system according to claim 18, wherein the at least one of the brake pedal and the clutch is depressed prior to a start of the vehicle to indicate an intent to start the vehicle.

23. (New) The startup/driving authorization system according to claim 15, wherein the locks for the at least one of the steering system, the power transmission, and the gear train are released prior to a start of the vehicle.

24. (New) The startup/driving authorization system according to claim 15, wherein the control unit is configured to automatically shut down an engine of the vehicle when the transponder is removed from within a communication range of the startup/driving authorization system and after the vehicle has come to a stop.